

**VASQUEZ BOULEVARD/INTERSTATE 70 SITE  
WORKING GROUP MEETING**

**FINAL MEETING SUMMARY  
January 11, 2000**

**Swansea Recreation Center**

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EPA, REGION VIII  
SUPERFUND BRANCH

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**IN ATTENDANCE**

**Working Group**

Joan Hooker, Clayton Neighborhood  
Anthony Thomas, Clayton Neighborhood  
Bonnie Lavelle, EPA Region 8  
Barbara O'Grady, State of Colorado, Department of Public Health and Environment  
Chuck Patterson, Globeville Neighborhood  
Sandy Douglas, Cole Neighborhood  
Celia VanDerLoop, City and County of Denver, Dept. of Environmental Health  
David Mellard, ATSDR  
Michael Maes, Elyria Neighborhood  
Mel Munoz, COPEEN  
Lorraine Granado, Cross Community Coalition  
Linda Larson, Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe (Asarco)  
Steve Hamel, Colorado Attorney General's Office  
Robin Mann, Elyria Neighborhood

**Contact Group**

Mark Rudolph, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
Pat Courtney, EPA Region 8  
Theresa NeSmith, ATSDR  
Sandy Coulberson, ATSDR  
Dave Hewitt, ATSDR  
Dave Folkes, EnviroGroup(Asarco)  
Marion Galant, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
Dan Sheppers, State of Colorado, Department of Public Health and Environment  
Joan Sullivan, City of Denver, Attorney's Office  
Julia Korndorfer, State of Colorado, Department of Public Health and Environment  
Monica Heitzman, City of Denver, Attorney's Office

**Observers**

Laurel Mattrey, COPEEN  
Sylvia Alan Lewis, ATSDR

## **Facilitators**

Mary Margaret Golten, CDR Associates  
Louise Smart, CDR Associates  
Tamara Sadoo, CDR Associates (note taker)

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **COMMUNITY ISSUES**

#### **Sampling crawl spaces in residential homes for arsenic and lead contamination**

The community pointed out that many basements are open to crawl spaces. There are no dividing walls. Many residents have converted their basements into living areas with windows at ground level and are frequently exposed to crawl space dust.

Although the EPA has concluded that the majority of arsenic and lead contamination is found at surface levels to 24-inch depths, the community requested the EPA sample a certain number of crawl spaces to eliminate this as a possible pathway. The community also requested the EPA sample crawl spaces from removal action homes to test earlier assumptions about whether highest levels of contamination are mostly found at surface levels.

Jane Mitchell suggested that crawl spaces be sampled and tested from homes where dust was sampled and tested in order to check for a possible correlation.

David Mellard suggested that residents with basements and living spaces in basements exposed to crawl spaces take precautions by closing up parts of their basements and installing filters. David added that there is no evidence so far to indicate that exposure to crawl spaces poses any significant problem.

#### **Dust as a result of construction and dirt piles**

The community expressed concern about the amount of dust being blown through their neighborhoods as a result of numerous construction projects and dirt piles in the immediate area. Of particular concern are the 25-30 dirt piles made up of different colored soils at 48<sup>th</sup> and Columbine. The dirt piles belong to Hope Communities. (See action items.)

Celia VanDerLoop explained that CDPHE has already ticketed one contractor due to numerous complaints made by local resident regarding blowing dirt. All complaints about excessive blowing dirt and dust should be made as soon as possible to both CDPHE and Jim Palmeno at CDOT. (See action items.)

## **Status of Air Monitoring Stations**

The community asked when the air monitoring stations would be up and running as promised by CDOT. (See action items.)

## **Testing of soils from Industrial areas and Railroad tracks**

The community requested that industrial areas and railroad tracks be tested for contamination. Many residential areas are in close proximity to industrial areas. These areas have no sidewalks, small amounts of foliage and are either next to or very close to the Interstate 70 corridor where large trucks pass by on a daily basis. No measures exist in these areas to suppress the blowing dust and dirt. These factors contribute to contamination affecting residents via inhalation. The EPA's risk assessment mainly focuses on ingestion as a pathway. Without data from the air monitoring stations, incorrect assumptions may be made about inhalation not being a primary pathway. If industrial areas and the railroad tracks are contaminated, the residential areas will continue to feel those effects, even if their private properties have been cleaned. The community would like to know if industrial areas are more, or less contaminated than residential areas.

The EPA explained that data from Globeville were examined and industrial sites in that area did not pose as great a problem regarding contamination as did residential areas. Therefore, industrial areas are a second priority. The EPA has limited resources and must be strategic in focussing their energies and priorities.

Dave Folkes is in the process of assembling data on industrial sites at Globeville for EPA's review. Data from the Globeville site indicates that arsenic contamination is found immediately surrounding the plant. Testing further away from the plant showed levels of contamination below 70 ppm.

## **Environmental Justice (EJ)**

The community expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of focus on environmental justice (EJ) in this process, and with the exclusion of inhalation as a pathway and the lack of information regarding the air in the area. The community would like to see actions taken on this site broadened to include inhalation as a pathway to assure that cumulative effects have been examined fully by the EPA and partnering agencies as the Environmental Justice Executive Order requires. At a minimum, the community requested a document be created according to EJ guidelines for making recommendations to state, county and city agencies regarding future uses of this particular area. The community would like to see connections made specifically between the Interstate 70/Vasquez Boulevard site and EJ issues.

The EPA pointed out that EJ can be taken into account when establishing action levels, but that air quality has no bearing on their clean up process.

CDPHE reported that as part of the new zoning process, they are analyzing cumulative risks and conducting risk modeling from air emissions for the city of Denver. Once data collection is complete, an analysis of that data will take place.

The community asked that every agency define their role in promoting and enforcing EJ, and indicate who would be in charge of ensuring EJ implementation. The community wants to be present at any EJ meetings between or among agencies to provide their input and perspectives.

A conference call will take place among the federal, state and local agencies involved in this process to determine who will be their EJ representatives and what each agency's role should be. (See action items.)

The EPA web site has a matrix identifying what all regions are doing to integrate environmental justice into their projects.

Lastly the community reported on receiving a grant from the EPA through the Regional Geographic Initiative to study sources and amounts of pollution they are being exposed to. Fact sheets are being created outlining sources of pollution, whom to report pollution to, along with measures to further protect health. These fact sheets will be available for distribution by the end of February 2000.

Dave Folkes will supply the community (and CDR for distribution) with information on lead emitted from gasoline exhaust spanning several decades.

Environmental Justice will be included on all Working Group agendas. (See action items.)

## **RISK ASSESSMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

- Contract and funding for re-sampling of all properties in Phases 1 and 2 with Phase 3 protocols in place.
- Re-sampling will begin in February 2000
- 1,200 homes will be re-sampled
- Original access agreements will be used and attempts will be made to sample properties where access was previously denied.
- Sampling will include soil only. No dust or vegetable samples will be taken
- Draft Risk Assessment, based on data collected to date, will be available for review and comment by the end of February 2000. Data will continue to be collected
- The final risk assessment will include all comments and new data
- Phase 3 sample results will be mailed out to individual property owners at the end of January 2000 along with announcements about the upcoming Availability Sessions

- Letters and announcements will be in English and Spanish
- Availability Sessions will be an opportunity for individual property owners to privately discuss the information provided by EPA regarding their property. Larger public meetings will be held to review and discuss a summary of the general sampling results.
- Availability Sessions (Private, individual discussions):
  - February 1<sup>st</sup>, Harrington Elementary School, 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
  - February 2<sup>nd</sup>, Swansea Recreation Center, 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Public Meetings
  - February 8<sup>th</sup>, Harrington Elementary School, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
  - February 9<sup>th</sup>, Swansea Recreation Center, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- A summary of EPA's presentation at the public meetings will be provided to the Working Group prior to February 8<sup>th</sup>.
- The EPA presentation will include pictorial flyers demonstrating ways to reduce exposure.
- The EPA will also provide the Working Group with generic copies of the letters they are mailing to the public.
- The community requested that the EPA also provide the Working Group with actual numbers of residents who agreed to have their properties sampled, both by neighborhood and phase, along with what was detected at what number of properties.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Draft Public Health Assessment discussion focussed on:

- Page 1: New summary highlighting important issues and conclusions made in the Public Health Assessment
- Page 52: Estimated demographics for 1998 and 2003, along with information on ages of houses in different neighborhoods
- Page 55: Table D-2: Percentage of housing units/homes and when they were built
- Page 56: Table D-3: Length of time residents have lived in their homes \*(This information could be important for calculating cancer risk in the risk assessment)
- Pages 34 and 35: Community questions are answered
- Page 39: Definitions of conclusion categories. No formal conclusion category has been chosen yet. However, ATSDR will assign conclusion category 1, 2, or 3 to the VB/I70 site.

- Page 42: ATSDR's recommendations for additional properties to be sampled by EPA
- Official draft Public Health Assessment will be provided to the Working Group and the agencies involved on January 30, 2000. Comments should be in writing and sent directly to David Mellard.

### **Community Comments:**

- Page 54: The demographic information about the Hispanic population in Cole and Clayton should be closer to 60%-70%
- Page 52: There are no mobile homes in Cole and Clayton

ATSDR will notify EPA as to which properties in the study area they believe to be at risk, indicating elevated levels of arsenic that might cause harmful effects to children, along with the number of properties showing this risk. The Public Health Assessment report will not cite specific clean up levels as ATSDR does not develop cleanup levels. The Public Health Assessment is intended to assist EPA in determining clean up levels. In its report ATSDR refers to two previous bioavailability studies and estimates that Chris Weis' current pig study will yield results between 20% and 50% bioavailability.

To determine effects on soil pica behavior, ATSDR used information from data points from Phases 1 and 2 sampling exhibiting high levels of arsenic and lead contamination. Data from Phase 3 will not be used to make short-term health effects evaluations. Long-term exposure evaluations will be determined from confirmation data combined with composite data from Phases 1 and 2.

EPA expressed concern about characterizing possible effects of arsenic and lead contamination based primarily on very conservative assumptions stemming solely from soil pica behavior.

EPA will make clean-up decisions based on Phase 3 data, which establishes relationships between soil and dust, soil and vegetables, and fine and bulk fractions. Although Phase 3 is not 100% complete, it does provide a more accurate characterization of all neighborhoods. Information from Phase Three and the bioavailability study will be used in the Risk Assessment.

Before final conclusions are reached, David Mellard, Chris Weis, and Jane Mitchell will meet to discuss risk assessment methods and what acute toxicity value will be used in relation to soil pica behavior. (See action items.)

After David, Chris, and Jane have met, a second meeting will be held to present the technical information to other agencies and members of the Working Group. (See action items.)

## **BIOMONITORING UPDATE**

- Biomonitoring investigations (urine testing) will take place on 100 people from the most contaminated properties based on Phase 3 data, focussing on children, to understand the magnitude of exposure. Only 100 people will be monitored due to availability of resources.
- If no exposure is found, biomonitoring investigations will cease.
- A conference call will be held to discuss hair arsenic testing. (See action items.)

## **HEALTH TEAM REPORT**

- ATSDR will continue to review health assessment, health promotion, and health education activities.
- Information is being gathered for ATSDR and CDPHE to use in on-site health education activities.
- Once more information about specific properties is available; ATSDR will conduct specific health-related activities.
- Next Health Team Meeting: February 17, 2000, 1:00 pm–4:00 pm at CCC. (See action items.)

## **NEXT WORKING GROUP MEETINGS**

- February 24, 2000, 8:30 am–1:00 pm, Swansea Recreation Center
- March 16, 2000, 8:30 am–1:00 pm, Swansea Recreation Center

## **MEETING EVALUATION**

- Some participants liked the new table arrangement—feeling that it brought people closer together for better discussion and decision making.
- Other participants felt the new table arrangement was too crowded and that sitting in straight rows kept people from seeing each other at times.
- Group members missed Mike Wenstrom during environmental justice discussions.